Poison & Potion Bottles

Here are a few poison and potion bottles I have found along the way, but first a bit of history of poison bottles.

Until the 1850s, there was virtually no regulation of poisonous substances. Anyone could buy them over the counter from the grocers. You could purchase deadly rat poison, ammonia or arsenic and take it home unlabelled (along with your food shopping!) in any container you chose to be filled.
Customers would recycle old food jars and drinks bottles. It comes as little surprise to learn that inevitable mix-ups happened. Hundreds of cases of accidental deaths by poisoning were recorded every year.
This was made worst as in Victorian homes there was no electricity. People needing medicine in the middle of the night, would reach for their bottle by candlelight and sometimes reached for the wrong one.
To stop these unnecessary deaths, chemists, doctors and glass companies started to patent different shapes that were designed to feel tactile to the touch. The distinctive ridges, bumps and grooves made sure you would know immediately, without looking, that you were holding a poison bottle. Bottles were also manufactured in bright colours such as cobalt blue and emerald green.

NOT TO BE TAKEN: These two poison bottles date from around 1910-1930. They are a very typical design found throughout the country. The contents would have ranged from external ointments, which may have contained Iodine or other antiseptic products.

INECTO: These three Inecto bottles date from the 1920-1930s. They contained a hair dye which came in various colours. These bottles would have had a cork stopper, with possible a Bakelite upper cap. The company continued through the 1950s, when the bottles have external screw threads and black Bakelite caps.

Below, "Not to be taken" green and cobalt blue bottles and Inecto hair dye bottles also found in amber coloured bottle.

NOT TO BE TAKEN

POISON

A.A BONES & CO. CHEMISTS, PRETORIA: This bottle is from the 1920s-1930s and was from Pretoria, South Africa. It still has some original liquid in it that appears to be ointment containing camphor, which would be used for aches and sprains.

SOCIETY OF HOMEOPATHY CHEMIST LIMITED: This green bottle dates from around the 1920s. Although it is unknown what the contents were, common remedies include Arnica, chamomile, St. John's wort.

RIDDELL: This amber bottle with Riddell embossed on the side is from around the 1930s. Riddell produced medical Asthmatic equipment during the 1930-1960s. This bottle is likely to have contained Bronchovydrin an active ingredient for use with this Asthma equipment.

Below Left to right: A.A. Bones bottle, Society of Homeopathy bottle, Riddell bottles and Riddell advert from 1936. Not to scale Riddell and homeopathy bottles are quite small

SOCIETY OF BOSTON
MASSACHUSETTS
1870

LEEDS

Coins

The oldest coin that has been found on the allotment was dug up on the "Bee plot" by Tom Bickerdike and is a One penny from 1869. We have found another Queen Victoria "Bun head" which is so worn that a date cannot be seen but will date from 1860-94. I love coins because that have dates on them, so there is no doubt how old it is! Below are some of the coins I have found.

Image below: Left to right, Victorian "Bun head" found on the plot and a half penny from 1904. Other coins from 1920-1960s

Buttons

I have found a few buttons over time, as with the coins I haven't really cleaned them up, Some are Naval, Army and some Suspenders! When I have more time, I may research them more. The button Top left on the image below appears to be Royal Navy Officers (Roped rim) lined background 19mm- 1843-1891 Queen Victoria crown.